

College Athlete NIL Litigation, Case No. 4:20-cv-03919

April 15, 2025

To The Honorable Claudia Wilken,

I write to the Court in response to class counsel's continued reluctance to revise the roster limits imposed in the current draft of the settlement. As a parent of three athletes, two swimming in Division I programs, and a current junior in high school going through the recruiting process, it has been beyond frustrating that there is no one advocating for the best interest for all these student athletes. Therefore, I am compelled to take this opportunity to speak out.

The roster reductions impacting these hard-working athletes have come without warning and have left many displaced without the option of a transfer. These young adults have worked their entire lives to hone their craft of sport and excelled in their college experience. The roster reductions pull the rug out from them with very little opportunity for a transfer. And if a rare transfer opportunity presents, it comes with the high price of losing significant credits towards graduation. Any athlete that places any importance on their education will find themselves faced with the loss of their career in sports, without closure, without celebration, but rather just cast out without any recognition of the time and dedication they have invested over their lifetime or the loyalty and dedication they have shown to both their team and school.

For those currently in the recruiting process, prior available roster spots have essentially evaporated, with recruits being told there are very few spots available for incoming freshman and preference is being given to transfers athletes. This shift will leave thousands of athletes on the sideline that have the potential to contribute at the college level. How can this be the intent? This will drive athletes away from sports, which has proven to be significant in teaching leadership skills, hard work, teamwork, sacrifice, determination and commitment.

One of the major justifications for roster caps has been the illusion that teams can have fully funded rosters. However, the reality for non-revenue sports at most institutions is that there is no additional revenue available to fund these new scholarship expansions. For many years, it has been commonplace for parents to be asked to supplement with fundraising and self-funding their athletes for basics like training gear, training trips and nutrition needed. This need will only increase as the funding shift is accelerated to fuel the most prized basketball and football programs.

I ask you to have the courage to see through the mirage and disregard the notion that roster limits should be pushed through. Class counsel's response to any modification on roster limits as being "unworkable" is simply lazy. It was inappropriate for any action to have already been taken before the settlement was approved. These athletes warrant more consideration and compassion for their years of dedication to their sport and teams instead of being discarded and irreversibly harmed by the loss of the opportunity to compete at the Division I level.

Respectfully,
Amy Lathrop
Parent and President, Perfect Pallets, Inc.